

State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Central Office ~ 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford, CT 06106

Promoting Equality and Justice for all People

Testimony to the Appropriations Committee Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Good morning, Senator Bye and Representative Walker, vice chairmen and all committee members. My name is Tanya Hughes. I'm the executive director for the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about our agency's budget. With me today is our deputy director, Cheryl Sharp as well as other key staff persons who will be available to answer any questions that you may have for us.

As you may be aware, CHRO, the nation's oldest state sponsored civil rights agency, has a broad mission: to eliminate discrimination in the state of CT through enforcement, advocacy, education, and affirmative action and contract compliance. We have brought for your review copies of our 2015 legislative booklet and a 2 page document which highlights in detail our program measurables.

The CHRO enforces the state's anti-discrimination laws, monitors hundreds of millions of dollars a year in state contracting, reviews state agency affirmative action plans, provides training and education and outreach to the business community, municipalities, nonprofit organizations and the general public, enforces the laws against discriminatory bullying in schools, enforces the laws against racial profiling and collaborates with state and federal agencies to ensure compliance and enforcement. The results of our efforts are demonstrated through expanded opportunities for individuals, minority and women owned businesses.

The last time our agency testified before this committee was in 2013. At that time we were just beginning to see results of the changes that occurred following the enactment of Public Act 11-237. Public Act 11-237 has given us the ability to try to expedite cases more quickly and efficiently by focusing on mediation and early legal intervention.

As the provided documentation will demonstrate, we have enhanced our policies and procedures and implemented necessary adjustments to 11-237 so that today, we are witnessing significant reductions in the time it takes for complaint processing, thereby increasing the numbers of individuals who actually receive regional or legal staff assisted services. It has also resulted in our ability to reduce our aged inventory to less than 5% of our overall inventory. You can review the legislative booklet for detailed information on some of the notable case work produced by our legal division. In 2014, the legal division was responsible for closing 536 cases, 36 of which were public hearings or court cases, and negotiated almost \$3 million dollars in settlements.

Last year over 2069 cases were filed agency-wide and we closed 2321 cases. We were also successful in securing over \$7,750,000 in settlements. In fact, the only division that represents a growing backlog is the Office of Public Hearings which currently is staffed by only two of a possible three referees authorized by statute

Over the past 2 years we have focused on trying to increase staffing levels, filling several critical vacancies which in turn has allowed us to focus on backlogs in complaint processing as well as affirmative action and contract compliance reviews. I am pleased to report that our revised affirmative action regulations were approved just yesterday by the regulations review committee.

The current budget presented last week gave us no new positions. It lists CHRO as being budgeted for 79 positions. We currently are staffed at 68 with anticipated vacancies due to retirement on the rise. If CHRO is to continue the strides we have made, we cannot afford to lose any staff people or suffer any further cuts to our budget. We have reduced our thumbprint by becoming more lean. Our current budget is largely comprised of personnel services. We have maximized our efforts to secure additional funds through our federal contracts with the EEOC and HUD, through grants and private contributions. At this time, the general fund is reimbursed about 20% of the costs of CHRO's operating budget from federal funding the generated through EEOC and HUD contracts. Additionally, grants received have allowed us the opportunity to hire durational staff and conduct tests throughout the state to monitor landlord's compliance with housing discrimination laws. Last year over \$1.5 million dollars was deposited into the CT general fund because of the work of CHRO. Our HUD award reflected an increase of \$79,000 from the previous year. As is evident the CHRO is utilizing every option available to reimburse the general fund for the Agency's operating expenses.

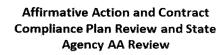
We recognize that this is a very difficult year and appreciate that the governor had to make some difficult choices in order to balance the budget. In light of all the concessions being asked across the state, we believe we can continue to produce successful results with the budget as presented, provided no further reductions are implemented and we are authorized to fill positions that are currently in our position count but not funded. Through our staff's hard work, procedural changes and the filling of critical vacancies, the Commission has been able to help tens of thousands of individuals each year. There is more work to be done, more citizens of this great state to be served and more injustice to be addressed. We are proud of the fact that CT has some of the most progressive anti-discrimination laws in the country. We are extremely appreciative of this committee for its long-standing and continued support of CHRO.

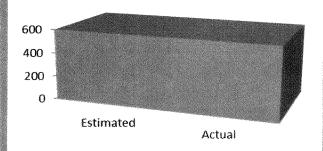
Thank you and we would be happy to accept any questions you have for us.

CHRO Measurables 2015

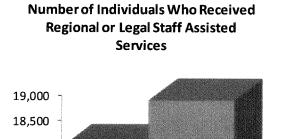


Program	Description	Estimated	Actual	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Equal Opportunity	Number of Individuals Receiving Regional Staff Assisted Service	18,000) 18,910	19,468	20,168	20,968
Regional Offices 4 and Legal Department	Number of Individuals Filing a Complaint with the Commission	1,800	2,146	2,050	2,100	2,200
	Number of Complaints Closed with the Commission	2,000	2,303	2,350	2,400	2,450
Housing	Number of Individuals Receiving Staff	800) 844	900	950	1,000
Equal Opportunity Contract Compliance	Number of prime, general, subs contractors, vendors/suppliers, developers, architects, professionals, individuals and state agencies receiving staff assisted	16,480) 20,280) 25,000	28,000	33,000
Contract Compliance	Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Plan Review and State Agency AA Review	600	den en e) 750	975	1175





Human Rights Contract Compliance



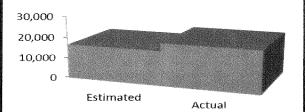
Equal Opportunity

Estimated 8 8 1

18,000

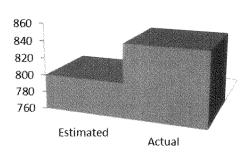
17,500

Number of prime, general, subs contractors, vendors/suppliers, developers, architects, professionals, individuals and state agencies receiving staff assisted technical assistance and services



Equal Opportunity Contract Compliance

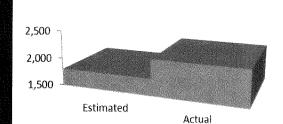
Number of Individuals who Recieved Staff Assisted Service



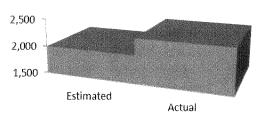
Housing

Number of Individuals Filing a Complaint with the Commission

Actual



Number of Complaints Closed with the Commission



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The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

One Mission, One Voice, One Commission



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Legislative Session 2015

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The Commission



The mission of the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity and justice for all persons within the state through advocacy and education.

Commissioners

Chairperson Gary H. Collins

Secretary Edward Mambruno

Commissioner Dawn Niles

Commissioner Andrew M. Norton

Commissioner Edith Pestana





CHRO is governed by a nine member volunteer Commission. This policy-making body is composed of five members appointed by the Governor and four members appointed by the Legislative leadership. Generally, the Commission meets on a monthly basis on the second Thursday of each month. Agency policy is implemented by a Commission-appointed executive director and agency staff selected in accordance with the State merit system.

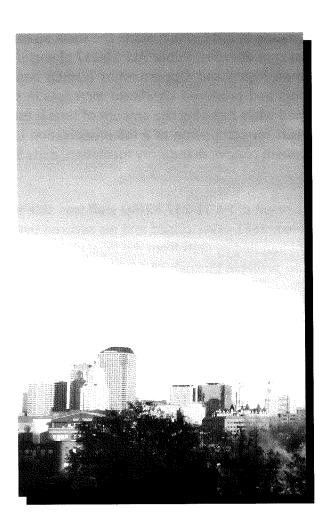
CHRO has four regional offices—Hartford, Waterbury, Bridge-port and Norwich—which receive and resolve complaints from individuals who believe they have suffered illegal discrimination. The Fair Housing Unit, Legal Services Division, the Office of Public Hearing, the Office of Contract Compliance/Affirmative Action Compliance and the Administrative Services Division are located at the Commission's administrative headquarters, also in Hartford, but at a site separate from the Hartford regional office.

CHRO also serves as the secretariat and consultant to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.

CHRO works to educate the public about human rights issues and organize community outreach activities. The staff investigates complaints of illegal discrimination and develops enforcement strategies to end the discrimination. CHRO also monitors affirmative action plans and contract compliance in State funded contracts.

Priority Issues

- ⇒ Enforcement of the anti-discrimination laws in employment, housing, credit transactions, and places of public accommodation
- ⇒ Monitoring compliance on state funded contracts
- ⇒ Eliminating discrimination in housing through testing and fair housing law enforcement
- ⇒ Training municipalities, state employees, and private employers on anti-discrimination laws
- ⇒ Education and outreach
- ⇒ Racial profiling prevention
- ⇒ Bullying prevention
- ⇒ Educating Connecticut youth about civil rights
- ⇒ Coalition building with other agencies and grassroots organizations
- ⇒ Monitoring state contracts for compliance with discrimination laws
- ⇒ Affirmative Action



CHRO Collaborations

CHRO & Safe Schools Coalition—Bullying Prevention

CHRO & Department of Justice—ADA and Accommodation Law

CHRO & Racial Profiling Advisory Group—Data Collection on Racial Profiling

CHRO & Department of Justice Roundtable

CHRO & Department of Education—CT Kids Court and Kids Speak

2015 Legislative Agenda

The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) initiated legislation in 2011 which made the most sweeping changes in case processing in decades. Public Act 11-237 changed how the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) handles discrimination complaints and produced significant increases in the amount of cases pro-



cessed while reducing the amount of time it took to do so. Case processing lengths went from greater than 2 years for completion of a full investigation to under one year to be processed through intake, merit assessment review, mandatory mediation, early legal intervention and or full investigation in many cases.

As a result of PA 11-237, CHRO staff was able to increase overall productivity reflecting a total of 2069 cases filed, 2321 cases closed and we secured over \$7,750,000 in monetary settlements. Many of these cases were handled by staff from the legal division, and managers and investigators who eagerly utilized the tools made available through PA 11-237.

This year, we are submitting legislation which seeks to further improve case processing efficiencies started under PA-11-237. We seek to add to the efficiencies of 11-237 by correcting some of the technical deficiencies in our current statutes and making it clear when CHRO has standing in a case.

We seek legislation to make de jure the right of a person to file a complaint with the Commission for a violation of the Alvin W. Penn Act which targets profiling in traffic stops and citations.

In two court decisions, the positions of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities were affirmed. On September 23, 2014 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the dismissal of a lawsuit brought against the Commission by the City of Shelton. The City claimed that the Commission was illegally deciding matters of federal law in violation of the U.S. Constitution. The Court of Appeals agreed with the Commission that when the Commission decides claims of discrimination under CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46a-58, which makes it unlawful to deprive any person of any rights secured or protected by the constitution and laws of the United States or the state of Connecticut, the Commission is only deciding questions of state law. The Court of Appeals ruled that the City's allegations of constitutional violations were not plausible enough to allow it to sue the Commission in federal court.

The CHRO filed an amicus brief in the case of Desrosiers v. Diageo North American, Inc. This brief stated the Commission's position that, while the text of CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46a-60(a)(1) only refers to discrimination on the basis of an employee's physical disability, the legislature intended the statute to also prohibit discrimination on the basis of an employer's perception that an employee is physically disabled. The Connecticut Supreme Court agreed with the Commission's stand. We seek to have this codified in law.

Executive Summary 2013-2014

2013-14 Budget - \$6,496,210 Number of positions filled - 70 full-time Authorized positions - 80 full-time

Statutory Responsibility

The statutory responsibility of the Commission is to:

- ⇒ Eliminate illegal discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations and credit transactions through education and law enforcement;
- ⇒ Monitor contract compliance laws and small contractor set-aside provisions by state agencies, contractors and subcontractors;
- ⇒ Review and monitor state agency affirmative action plans and compliance with laws requiring affirmative action and equal opportunity in state government; and
- ⇒ Establish equal opportunity and justice for all persons in Connecticut through education and outreach.

An Executive Director appointed by the Commission oversees the operations of the agency. The agency has four regional offices located in Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport and Norwich, which receive and investigate cases from individuals who believe that they have suffered illegal discrimination. The agency's administrative office, also located in Hartford, houses the Office of the Executive Director, the Legal Division, the Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Unit, the Fair Housing Unit and the Office of Public Hearings.

Contract Compliance: Throughout the 2013-2014 year the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities' (CHRO) Contract Compliance Unit (CCU) continued its efforts to advise state agencies and their funding recipients, of their anti-discrimination and supplier diversity statutory and regulatory obligations under C.G.S. §4a-60 and relevant CHRO Contract Compliance Regulations. Agency staff also reviewed 289 Affirmative Action Plans (AAPs) submitted by contractors who were awarded state-funded public works and other state financed contracts whose monetary values ranged from \$50,000 to \$174,000,000; 6443 technical assistance sessions and/or conversations were conducted to assist contractors in complying with anti-discrimination and supplier diversity statutes and regulations. The unit has provided 6 trainings over the past fiscal year.

Affirmative Action Regulations: In 2013 changes to the legislation were submitted to better define the purpose of Affirmative Action Plans. We hope to have the Affirmative Action Regulations approved in February of 2015.

Complaints Against Agency Heads and Affirmative Action Officers: Pursuant to CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46a -68(b)(4)(B), the Commission receives any complaint alleging that the executive head of a state agency or department, any member of a state board or commission or any affirmative action officer engaged in discriminatory conduct to determine whether it should be forwarded to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for investigation. If the complaint is made against DAS, CHRO conducts the investigation. The purpose of this legislation was to eliminate the conflict that may arise if an affirmative action officer has to investigate allegations against his/her supervisor, as EEOs report directly to the appointing authority.



Diversity and Education: By statute, the Commission serves as the secretariat for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission (MLK). The MLK Commission, with assistance from the CHRO sponsored the 29th annual awards event commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 19, 2015 at the State Capital, Hartford, CT. In attendance were members of Congress, the Legislature, and Constitutional officers.

Public Hearings: The Office of Public Hearings (OPH) conducts contested case proceedings in discrimination cases brought by the Commission and in whistleblower retaliation cases filed with the Chief Human Rights Referee pursuant to CONN. GEN. STAT. § 4-61dd. The average number of cases pending litigation at OPH in the FY 2013-2014 was 129. To further assist with agency efficiency, the legal department provided substantial assistance with mandatory mediations and investigative activities on the regional level.

Training, Education and Outreach: Human Rights Attorneys serve on the Safe Schools Climate Committee and the Safe Schools Climate Resource Network of professionals working to eliminate discriminatory bullying in schools. The CHRO issued guidance on the legislative enactment regarding gender identity and gender expression. The CHRO partnered with the Department of Labor, Health and the CT Breastfeeding Coalition to publish joint guidance regarding breastfeeding at work and in places of public accommodation.

The Agency has held multiple informational sessions throughout the year and all of the sessions have been open to the general public and broadly advertised. At all of the events, literature is distributed to the attendees about the anti-discrimination laws. The CHRO also has published its housing discrimination brochure in Spanish and utilizes the language line when dealing with non-English speaking potential Complainants during the CHRO's processing of a complaint. CHRO was awarded a \$227,000 FHIP/FHAP Partnership grant to, among other things, conduct Housing Testing throughout the state. The CHRO also publishes a quarterly newsletter which is widely disseminated.

The CHRO sponsored an EEOC and CHRO meet and greet. The CHRO developed several power-point presentations for training purposes and public use. The CHRO is working closely with the EEOC to integrate all components of EEOC's strategic enforcement plan (SEP) whose purpose and focus is to coordinate enforcement activity that will result in sustainable impact in reducing and deterring discriminatory practices in the workplace. The national priorities of the SEP are:

- 1. Eliminating barriers in recruitment in hiring.
- 2. Protecting immigrant, migrant and other vulnerable workers.
- Addressing emerging and developing issues.
- 4. Enforcing equal pay laws.
- 5. Preserving access to the legal system.
- Preventing harassment through systemic enforcement and targeted outreach.

The CHRO and GPP received a Federal FHAP Partnership grant to provide training to Housing Authorities and Schools to address discriminatory bullying in schools and has endeavored to influence thousands of CT residents with their outreach efforts. CHRO Attorneys collaborated with the Department of Justice to provide outreach to the Muslim, Sikh and Arab communities regarding their rights to be free from discriminatory bullying in schools and places of accommodation.

CHRO Attorneys provided training on transgender law at UCONN during the Transgender Lives Conference. CHRO Attorneys participated in a Call to Action: regarding the discriminatory effect that lead paint exposure has on children of color. CHRO Attorneys served as panelists for the Civil Rights Conference sponsored by the Department of Justice and served as speakers for the training conference designed to address law enforcement personnel regarding disability rights law. The CHRO sponsored a Housing Fair for all of the municipal housing authorities throughout the state.

The CHRO in collaboration with the African American Affairs Commission, the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, the Asian and Pacific American Affairs Commission, the State Department of Education and the Office of Protection and Advocacy co-sponsored a Kids Court Competition to raise the social consciousness of youth regarding civil and human rights issues. The CHRO sponsors an internship program for high school, college and law school students which allows students to learn first-hand about the civil rights movement and the CHRO's role in that movement. Human Rights Attorneys provided diversity training to over 2,000 educators across the state.

The Commission was instrumental in getting CHRO included as a link on the CTRP3 website and on the face of tickets handed our during traffic stops so that injured parties can immediately know where to file a complaint if they believe they have been victims of discrimination.

Human Rights Attorneys, as a part of the Commission's Business Training Institute and Speaker's Bureau provided training to over twenty business and non-profit organizations across the state on the Commission's complaint process, sexual harassment in the workplace, and employment, credit, housing and public accommodations discrimination. The CHRO co-sponsored multiple informational sessions and community events throughout the state to raise the consciousness of the general public regarding civil and human rights laws.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

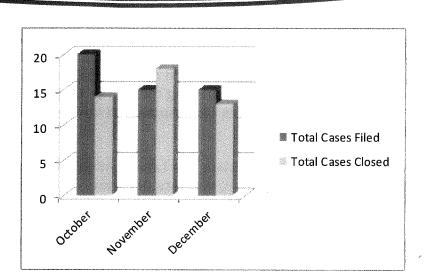
Affirmative Action

The Commission remains firmly committed to the principles of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. The commission's affirmative action plan for the review period ending October 31, 2012 was approved. The Commission is now on a biennial filing schedule and will file the next plan on January 30, 2015. Over the last fiscal year, the Commission reviewed fifty-nine (59) affirmative action plans submitted by state agencies. Of these, fifty (50) were approved, six (6) were disapproved, and three (3) were conditionally approved. Additionally, the Commission staff conducted technical assistance reviews with agencies seeking assistance to address weak or deficient areas of their affirmative action plans.

Freedom of Information

The Commission takes seriously its responsibility to comply with the provisions of the state's Freedom of Information Act. The Legal Division is responsible for responding to all freedom of information (FOI) requests, except those received directly in a regional office requesting a file being processed by that office. The Legal Division also responds to subpoenas for documents and testimony related to agency procedures and documents. Support staff handles most requests; complex requests and hearings are referred to the Managing Director. The Legal Division in fiscal year 2011-2012 received a total of 118 FOI requests. The Managing Director ensures that all regular and special Commission meetings are properly noticed and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

Housing Unit





The Housing Discrimination Unit handles all inquiries that are received from the public by the CHRO related to residential housing.

The Units main responsibility is to take and process complaints of housing discrimination that fall under Sections 46a-64c and 46a-81e of the Connecticut General Statutes. The unit will assist individuals in filing jurisdictional complaints and investigate those complaints by means of conducting interviews, field visits, and fact finding conferences and gathering documentation to determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe the law has been violated. Staff will attempt to remedy any probable violations by means of mediation and conciliation and if unsuccessful through conciliation, by preparing the cases for formal prosecution by the Commission's legal department.

The unit works directly with our federal counterparts at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct joint investigations under Title 6 of the Federal Fair Housing Act, the Federal Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Also under contract with HUD, the unit investigates and conciliates cases for HUD the fall under Title 8 of the federal Fair Housing Act.

The Unit also provides education and outreach to the public about housing discrimination and the obligations of landlords, realtors, the media, and others under these laws.

In addition, the unit provides referral services to the public regarding housing related matters that do not fall under its jurisdiction by assisting those individuals to locate organizations or other State agencies that can assist them with their concerns.

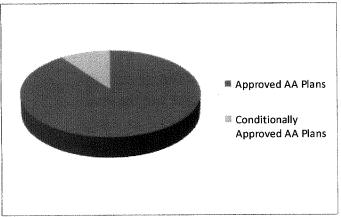
Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Units

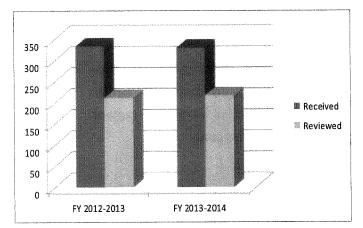


Affirmative Action

The AA Unit continues to monitor and enforce affirmative action laws and regulations to ensure equal opportunity in state employment. The unit has been actively engaged in campaigning against weakening the affirmative action regulations. As the state has created new agencies and redefined existing agencies, the Affirmative Action Unit works to ensure that these changes do not negatively affect protected classes.

AA Unit staff have provided 284 technical training opportunities to Affirmative Action



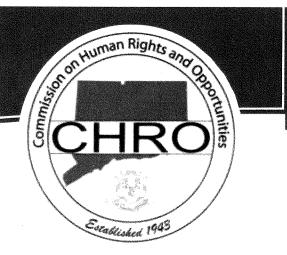


Contract Compliance

Throughout the 2013-2014 year, the Contract Compliance Unit continued its efforts to advise state agencies and their funding recipients of their anti-discrimination and supplier diversity statutory and regulatory obligations under CONN. GEN. STAT. § 4a-60 and relevant CHRO Contract Compliance Regulations. Agency staff also reviewed 289 Affirmative Action Plans submitted by contractors who were awarded state-funded public works and other state financed contracts whose monetary values ranged from \$50,000 to \$174,000,000; 6443 technical assistance sessions and/or conversations were conducted to assist contractors in complying with anti-discrimination and supplier diversity statutes and regulations. The unit has provided 6 trainings over the past fiscal year.

The unit also continues to advocate that municipal projects funded by state money are covered by the con-

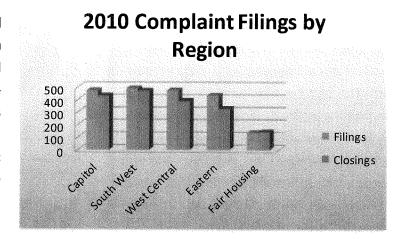
Enforcement in the Regional Offices



The Commission's regional offices took in a total of 2100 complaint filings in 2013-2014. This a 6% increase from the 2009-2010 filing period.

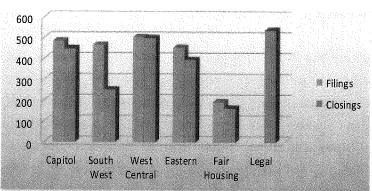
Due to the procedural changes enacted under Public Act 11-237 and the much needed filling of staff vacancies, a total of 2290 cases were closed by the regions and the legal division. This marks a 23% increase in case closures from four years ago, resulting in a dramatic decrease in the Commission's case backlog.

Generally, the CHRO strives to have case closures keep pace with filings. Staff shortages in particular regions have affected this goal.





2014 Complaint Closings by Region



Legal Division



Notable Case Work of 2014

City of Shelton v. Collins — The United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the dismissal of a lawsuit brought against the Commission by the city of Shelton. The city had claimed that the Com-

mission was illegally deciding matters of federal law in violation of the United States Constitution. The Second Circuit agreed with the Commission that Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-58 makes it unlawful to deprive any person of rights secured or protected by the Constitution, federal, or state law based on their protected class status. The Court of Appeals ruled that the City's allegations of constitutional violations were not plausible enough to allow it to sue the Commission in federal court.

Trusz v. UBS Realty Investors LLC — The Commission filed an amicus brief regarding whether CT should apply the employer definition from <u>Garcetti v. Ceballos</u>, 547 U.S. 410 (2006) to whistleblower retaliation claims under Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51q.

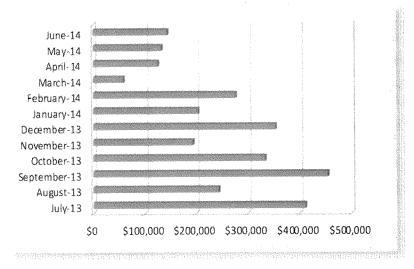
Tomick v. UPS — The Commission filed an extensive amicus brief arguing that punitive damages are available under Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-104)

Desrosiers v. Diageo North America, Inc. Et Al. — The Supreme Court of Connecticut relied on an amicus brief filed by the CHRO in holding that Connecticut's physical disability laws protected perceived disabilities.

Legal Case Work

In 2014, the Legal Division closed 536 cases. Thirty-four of those closings were public hearings or court cases.

The Legal Division had almost \$3 million dollars in negotiated settlements, including several individual cases settling for over \$100,000.



The Legal Division reached settlements amounting to \$2,936,023 in the 2013-2014 year.

Business Training Institute

Connecticut law prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and credit transactions. In an effort to eliminate discrimination in employment in the state, the Commission launched its Business Training Institute. Commission attorneys provide free training for employers regarding state and federal anti-discrimination laws.



Topics include:

Employment discrimination

Workplace harassment

Sexual harassment

Disability discrimination

Reasonable accommodation law

Transgender law

Credit transaction discrimination

Public accommodation discrimination

CHRO processes and procedures

In 2014, the Commission conducted trainings for:

- The Department of Labor Fair
- A private association of employers in Mystic
- Insurance companies and their clients in Cromwell
- The Trailblazer Company
- A private company in East Hartford
- Local high schools having issues with cyberbullying and racial slurs
- The Transgender Lives Conference
- Community sessions in the Regional Offices
- Municipal police departments across the state
- The U.S. Office of Probation
- Landlords and realtors across the state
- Coalition for Healthy Homes
- Public schools across the state
- And many, many, more.



Outreach

Statewide Informational Sessions—The CHRO hosted informational sessions on its complaint process for the general public around the state

Public School Presentations and Outreach—CHRO Attorneys continue their efforts to provide training throughout

the state of Connecticut to various school districts regarding harassment and bullying

Kids Speak—On May 22, 2014 the Connecticut Kids Speak event was held at the University of Connecticut School of Law with a large turnout of three hundred twenty students from across the state

Kids Court—On June 10, 2014 the Connecticut Kids Court essay contest was held at the state capitol

50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act—The Deputy Director sat on a civil rights panel at a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act at the University of New Haven

Government Helps—The Deputy Director and the West Central Regional Manager participated in "Government Helps," an event sponsored by Senator Chris Murphy and provided information about the Commission

CBIA Business Day—Executive management attended the CBIA Business Day at the Capitol and the agency was featured as a resource in the manual provided to attendees

Martin Luther King Day—The Commission participates in several events commemorating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., for example a celebration and informational event at the Yale Peabody Museum in New Haven, the Liberty Bell Ringing Ceremony held at the State Capitol, and a community discussion about diversity at the Solomon Schechter Day School

Internship Program—CHRO staff members continue to reach out to undergraduate, graduate, and law students who are interested in learning about the work of the Commission, the agency has attended career fairs at schools such as UConn, Suffolk University, and New York University

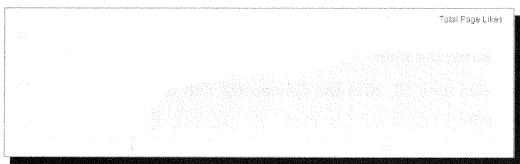


Social Media

The Commission has been focusing on expanding its social media footprint. Social media is a great way to reach our stakeholders.



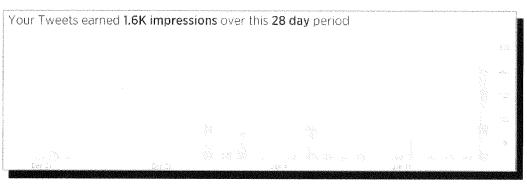
facebook

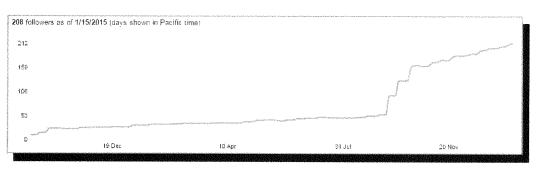


The Commission's Facebook page has over 250 "Likes," representing the agency's increasing public visibility.

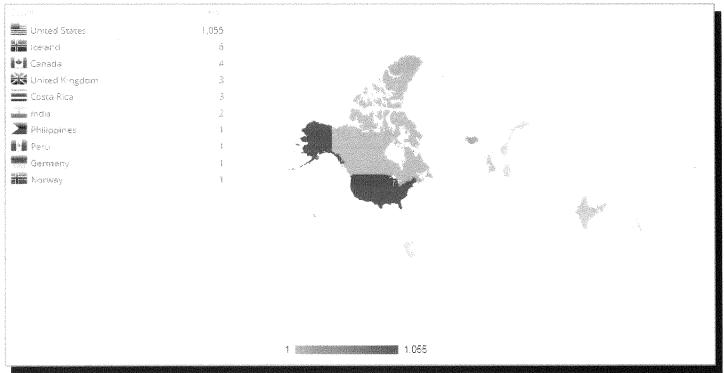
Ewitter

@ct_chro has had over 1600 tweet views over the course of the past month. With the Commission's greater emphasis on social media outreach, our followers have dramatically increased over the past year.

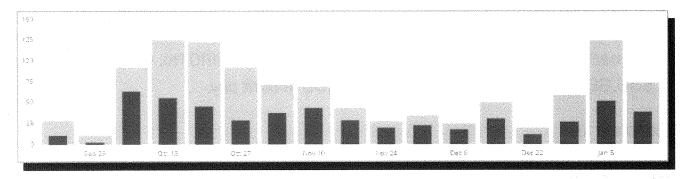






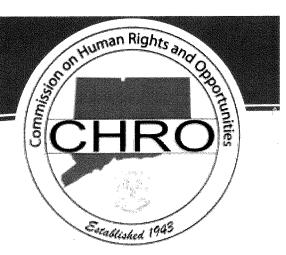


The Commission's blog, found at ctchro.wordpress.com, is updated weekly and has readers from ten different countries around the world



The blog has over one thousand views in total with a weekly rate often exceeding 125 views since its inception in mid-September, 2014.

The Cost of Noncompliance



Noncompliance with discrimination laws can result in several different types of legal damages including, but not limited, to:

Emotional distress

Planas v. Bierko, CHRO No. 9420599 (1995). Respondent paid sum of \$75,000 for emotional distress damages

Expenses incurred by the complainant for obtaining alternate housing or space

Shirley Banks and Phyllis Hansberry v. Eddie Eckhaus and Longhill Real Estate, CHRO No. 0250114 and 0250115 (2003), \$931.00 for the rent differential

Storage of goods and effects

Shirley Banks and Phyllis Hansberry v. Eddie Eckhaus and Longhill Real Estate, CHRO No. 0250114 and 0250115 (2003), \$862.94

Attorney's fees and costs

David Gilmore v. City of Waterbury, CHRO No. 9620571 (2000), \$61,722

Back and front pay

Kelly Smalls v. Waterbury Masonry and Foundation, Inc., CHRO No. 0330386 (2004), \$36,696.00 in back pay and \$45,136.00 in front pay.

Economic loss

Wayne Harrington v. United Technologies Corporation, et al., CHRO NO. 9710649 (2000), \$75,037.00 as monetary compensation for his economic loss, with interest compounded at the rate of ten percent (10%)

Prejudgement interest

Joan B. Hansen v. W.E.T. National Relocation Services and the City of Bridgeport, CHRO No. 0020220 (2001). The complainant was awarded \$14,493.00 for back pay with \$1,449.00 for prejudgment interest and post-judgment interest at ten percent (10%) for the unpaid balance.

Postjudgement interest

John Crebase v. Proctor and Gamble Pharmaceuticals, Inc., CHRO No. 0330171 (2006). The respondent shall pay postjudgment interest to the complainant at ten percent (10%) per annum compounded annually on \$168,390.00 (representing the total of the award for back pay, medical expenses, mitigation expenses and emotional distress)

Monetary or non-monetary remedies such as hiring or reinstatement of employees, with our without back pay

John Crebase v. Proctor and Gamble Pharmaceuticals, Inc., CHRO No. 0330171 (2006)

Restoration to membership in any respondent labor organization

The respondent shall reinstate the complainant to the next account representative position that becomes available within Connecticut. The respondent shall pay the complainant the sum of \$80,000.00 per annum plus all benefits provided to its account representatives until it hires the complainant, or he reaches the age of 65 or he is offered such a position and declines, whichever occurs first.

Fringe Benefits

Roberta A. Dacey v. The Borough of Naugatuck, CHRO No. 8330054 (1999), \$37,949.62.

Special Interest Areas

Complaint Based and Audit Testing Program Partnership Project with Quinnipiac Law School

The CHRO has completed its first round of complaint based and audit housing testing. Tests will be used as evidence in future litigation and the Commission will also be filing Commission initiated complaints based on the evidence that was gathered. The purpose of the testing program is to determine whether or not there is evidence that Connecticut landlords are engaged in discriminatory housing practices.

CHRO



The CHRO received and utilized over \$200,000 in funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. These funds were used in four FHIP/FHAP projects aimed at preventing, detecting, investigating, and prosecuting cases of housing discrimination.

LGBT Conference

The CHRO with the National Center for Lesbian Rights hosted a seminar in August of 2014 to educate the members of the LGBT community of the new protections under the Equal Access Rule and the state law and educate housing providers and advocates of the new obligations under the Equal Access rule and under state law and allow an opportunity for individuals who believe that they are the victims of illegal discrimination to file complaints of discrimination with the Commission.

Racial Profiling Advisory Board

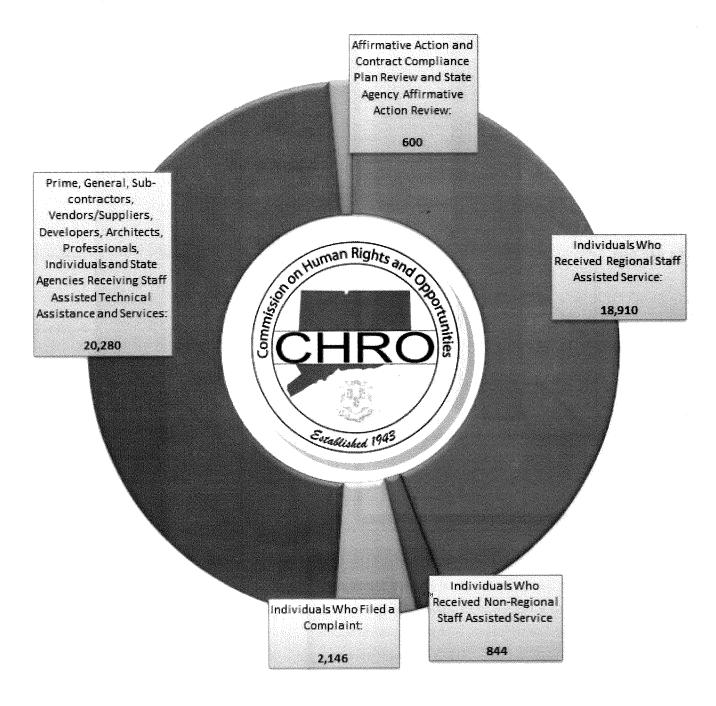
The Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act (CONN. GEN. STAT. § 54-1I and 54-1m) prohibits any law enforcement agency from stopping, detaining, or searching any motorist when the stop is motivated solely by considerations of the race, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. The CHRO has a vital role in enforcing the laws against racial profiling in the state of Connecticut.

School Bullying

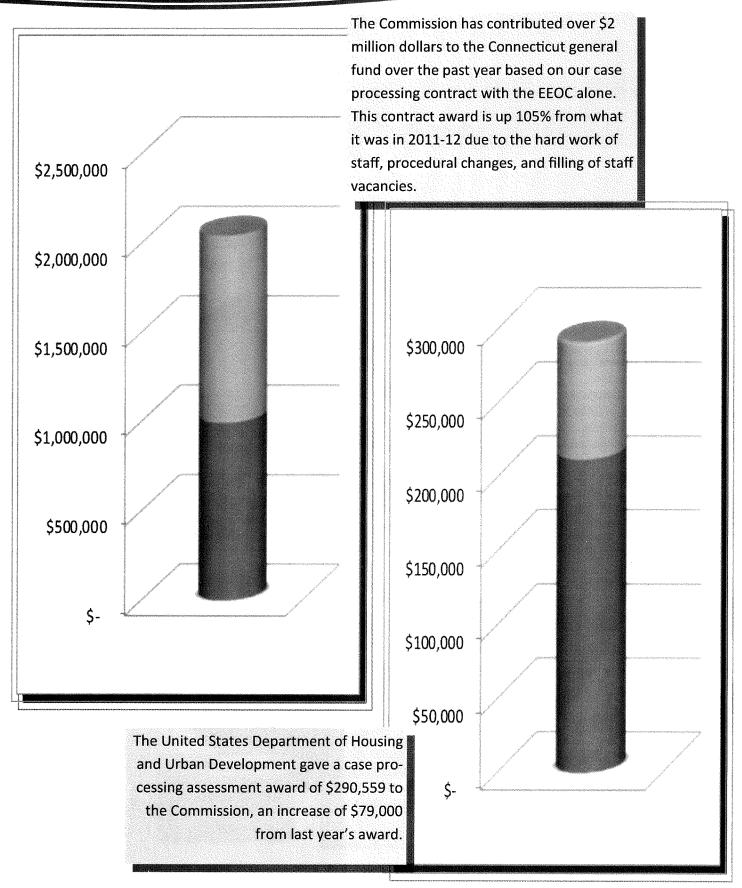
Several CHRO staff persons are members of the Connecticut Safe Schools Coalition. This group of interested individuals is actively working to reduce the incidents of bullying and discrimination in schools and to create a safe learning environment for students. The CHRO also provides training to schools regarding harassment and bullying.

Inquiries

The Commission helps tens of thousands of individuals each year in the state of Connecticut.



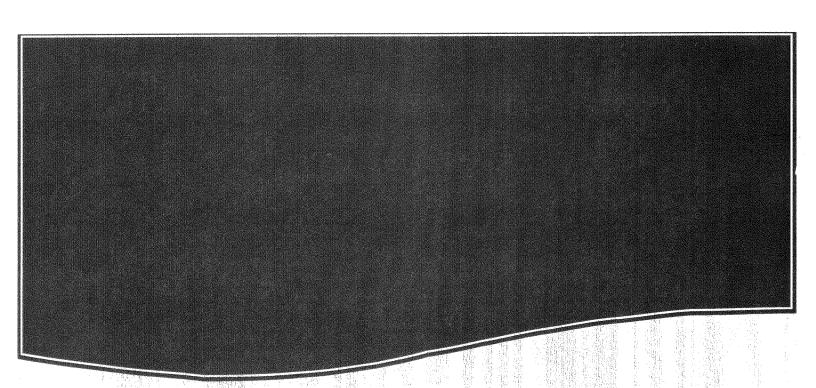
CHRO Generated Federal Dollars to the General Fund





The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

One Mission, One Voice, One Commission



The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

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